

POLITICAL FEATURE 1-1194
RUSSEL SPLANE/PLAINS, GA

AUGUST 1, 1976

ELECTION SEVENTY-SIX -- CARTER PLANNING ADMINISTRATION

INTRO: ALTHOUGH THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IS STILL THREE MONTHS AWAY, DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE JIMMY CARTER ALREADY HAS PLANNERS AT WORK SHAPING THE NEW ADMINISTRATION HE HOPES TO HEAD. VOA CORRESPONDENT RUSSEL SPLANE REPORTS FROM MISTER CARTER'S HOME TOWN OF PLAINS, GEORGIA.

TEXT: ONE OF THE HALLMARKS OF JIMMY CARTER'S CAMPAIGN -- BOTH WHEN HE RAN FOR GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA IN NINETEEN SEVENTY AND AS HE PREPARED FOR THIS YEAR'S SERIES OF PRIMARY ELECTIONS -- WAS ADVANCE PLANNING. THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER, MISTER CARTER HAS LEFT LITTLE TO CHANGE -- PREFERING INSTEAD TO RELY ON CAREFUL PREPARATION AND METICULOUS ATTENTION TO DETAIL.

IN HIS CURRENT DRIVE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE, MISTER CARTER IS USING THE SAME TECHNIQUE. QUIETLY, WITH A MINIMUM OF PUBLICITY, THE DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE HAS SET INTO MOTION A SERIES OF COORDINATED STUDIES INVOLVING HUNDREDS OF EXPERTS -- AIMED AT SHAPING THE PROGRAMS AND PRIORITIES THAT WOULD BE PUT INTO EFFECT IF HE IS ELECTED IN NOVEMBER. THE PLANNERS ALSO ARE QUIETLY PREPARING A LIST OF NAMES FROM WHICH MISTER CARTER WOULD BE EXPECTED TO CHOOSE THE KEY OFFICIALS, WHO WOULD BE CHARGED WITH CARRYING OUT THE PROGRAMS NOW BEING BLUEPRINTED BY THE EXPERTS IN THE EVENT THE CARTER CANDIDACY MEETS WITH SUCCESS AT THE POLLS.

TO ACCOMPLISH ALL THIS, A SEPARATE STAFF IS BEING ASSEMBLED AND SEPARATE OFFICES ARE BEING PREPARED IN ATLANTA. THE PROJECT IS BEING DIRECTED BY JACK WATSON -- A THIRTY-SEVEN-YEAR-OLD ATLANTA ATTORNEY WHO SAYS HIS JOB IS TO HELP TRANSLATE CAMPAIGN PROMISES INTO WORKABLE ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS. POLITICAL HISTORIANS SAY THE CARTER DECISION TO BEGIN THIS PREPARATORY WORK WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE ELECTION IS UNIQUE. IN THE PAST, MOST SUCCESSFUL

U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES HAVE WAITED UNTIL AFTER THE NOVEMBER ELECTION AND HAVE USED THE SO-CALLED TRANSITION PERIOD -- BETWEEN THE ELECTION AND THE INAUGURATION IN JANUARY -- TO LAY DOWN THE BROAD OUTLINES OF THEIR ADMINISTRATIONS.

MISTER CARTER'S DECISION TO START HIS PLANNING THIS EARLY POSES TWO THREATS. FOR ONE, THE PLANNING WORK COULD CAUSE SOME PROBLEMS FOR THE DEMOCRATIC TICKET IN THE FALL, IF IT IS INTERPRETED AS SHACKING OF ARROGANCE OR OVERCONFIDENCE. AND, SECONDLY, THE COSTS INVOLVED MEAN LESS AVAILABLE MONEY FOR THE CAMPAIGN ITSELF. AS MISTER WATSON PUTS IT -- EVERY DOLLAR SPENT FOR PLANNING A CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS A DOLLAR LESS THAT IS AVAILABLE TO BUY TELEVISION TIME THAT COULD HELP MAKE SUCH AN ADMINISTRATION A REALITY.

/ / / REST OPTIONAL / / /

TO LIMIT THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF MISTER WATSON'S ASSIGNMENT, THE ATLANTA ATTORNEY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED NOT TO OFFER ANYONE A JOB IN THE PROPOSED CARTER ADMINISTRATION. SOME TEN-THOUSAND PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO SEEK APPOINTMENTS, ALTHOUGH ONLY ABOUT FIFTEEN-HUNDRED POLITICAL SLOTS WILL BE AVAILABLE. FURTHERMORE, SAYS MISTER WATSON, IF YOU LOOK AT THE JOBS THAT REQUIRE DIRECT PRESIDENTIAL ATTENTION, THE FIGURE IS PROBABLY LESS THAN TWO HUNDRED.

AS FOR THE POLICY FORMULATION THAT WILL SHAPE HIS PROPOSED ADMINISTRATION, MISTER CARTER IS EXPECTED TO SHUN THE TRADITIONAL TASK FORCE APPROACH IN FAVOR OF DIRECT CONTACT WITH INDIVIDUAL EXPERTS, AS HE HAS DONE ALREADY IN A SERIES OF BRIEFING SESSIONS AT PLAINS. MISTER CARTER'S APPROACH, HIS AIDES SAY, IS AIMED AT LEAVING THE REAL DECISIONS TO HIMSELF.